

**Marquette University**  
**e-Publications@Marquette**

---

Philosophy Faculty Research and Publications

Philosophy, Department of

---

1-1-2001

## Preface [to *Italian Renaissance Masters*]

Curtis Carter

*Marquette University*, [curtis.carter@marquette.edu](mailto:curtis.carter@marquette.edu)

---

Published version. "Preface," in *Italian Renaissance Masters*. Eds. Annemarie Sawkins, David Franklin, and Louis Alexander Waldman. Milwaukee, Patrick and Beatrice Haggerty Museum of Art, Marquette University, 2001: 6. [Publisher Link](#). © 2001 Patrick and Beatrice Haggerty Museum of Art, Marquette University. Used with permission.

## Director's Preface

As part of the Fourth Annual International Festival for the Arts in Milwaukee celebrating Italian art and culture, the Haggerty Museum of Art has organized the exhibition Italian Renaissance Masters. The exhibition brings together for the first time 45 works from museums, galleries, and private collections across the nation, making a number of visual and historical connections and inviting further scholarly review of the works presented. This exhibition is intended to increase the visibility and appreciation of Italian Renaissance art by presenting to the public a rich display of paintings and decorative artifacts created in Italy during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The exhibition and its accompanying catalogue informs both public understanding and scholarly research on the art as well as the artists of the Italian Renaissance.

The Italian Renaissance is one of the most vital periods in art history. The majority of works from this period are either fresco paintings in situ or panel paintings, which rarely travel. Hence the exhibition represents an opportunity for students and art enthusiasts to see a selection of Italian Renaissance art not generally available to the public. This exhibition and its catalogue provide a broad introduction to the styles and themes found in Italian art from the late fourteenth century through the sixteenth century. Here one finds work representing major artistic movements, key centers of production and characteristic genres, subjects and techniques, used by Renaissance artists. One will also learn about the complexity of artists' familial and workshop relationships.

In 1999 the Haggerty Museum acquired the *Portrait of Piero di Domenico Pagni* by the Florentine artist Ridolfo Ghirlandaio, with the support of the Mary B. Finnigan Art Endowment Fund. The desire to provide a broader context for viewing this important acquisition to the Haggerty collection was a major factor in the decision to mount the current exhibition. The exhibition also provides the opportunity to display the early Italian pieces in the Haggerty collection such as *Christ at the Column* by Giovanni Pietro Pedrini [Rizzoli], *The Mystic Marriage of Saint Catherine* by an artist within the circle of Lorenzo Sabatini, and an important *Adoration of the Shepherds* attributed to a Florentine painter. Paintings by Ghirlandaio, Jacopo Bassano, Giovanni Larciani, and Michele Tosini are included in the exhibition along with works from museums in Milwaukee, Minneapolis, and New Orleans as well as artists' works found in smaller public and private collections across the nation.

The catalogue, *Italian Renaissance Masters*, includes three essays. Exhibition curator, Annemarie Sawkins' introduction to the exhibition covers religious and secular aspects of Renaissance art and the painting practices of the period. David Franklin, curator of prints and drawings at the

National Gallery of Canada, has contributed an original essay on Ridolfo Ghirlandaio, one of the leading Florentine contributors to Renaissance art. Louis Alexander Waldman, a specialist on Renaissance art at the University of Texas at Austin, has provided new scholarship on Giovanni Larciani and other Florentine artists featured in the exhibition.

Prominent among the loans to the exhibition are works from institutions which received donations from the philanthropist Samuel H. Kress through the Foundation established in his name. Under the direction of Kress's brother Rush H. Kress, thousands of works of European art were given to museums, universities and other institutions across the United States from the 1930s through the 1960s. The Kress donation represents the single most important gift of art in the nation's history, a gift which enabled smaller institutions across the United States to receive important works of art and to display these for the public.

The institutions with Kress Collection holdings featured in this exhibition include the David and Alfred Smart Museum of Art, Elvehjem Museum of Art, the Bucknell University Art Gallery, New Orleans Museum of Art and the Museum of Art and Archeology at the University of Missouri, Columbia. These museums have been most generous in providing works from their collections. The Sarah Campbell Blaffer Foundation under the directorship of James Clifton has also contributed to this exhibition with the loan of four paintings from the collection amassed by the late Sarah Campbell Blaffer of Texas whose love for art inspired her to make masterworks available to a broad audience. Other lenders to the exhibition include the Jesuit institutions: McMullen Museum of Art, Boston College, and the Martin D'Arcy Museum of Loyola University in Chicago. Public museums lending to the exhibition include: Grand Rapids Art Museum, Milwaukee Art Museum, The Minneapolis Institute of Arts, and the New Orleans Museum of Art. Other university museum lenders include Bucknell University Art Gallery, Lewisburg, Pennsylvania; The Elvehjem Museum of the University of Wisconsin, Madison; La Salle University Art Museum, Philadelphia; Museum of Art and Archeology of the University of Columbia-Missouri; Palmer Museum of Art, Pennsylvania State University; The David and Alfred Smart Museum of Art at the University of Chicago; and The Snite Museum of Art, University of Notre Dame. Private galleries and collectors lending to the exhibition are Piero Corsini Inc.; Richard Feigen & Co. of New York; Simon C. Dickinson Ltd. of London; Dr. and Mrs. James Conley of Milwaukee and an anonymous lender.

Curtis L. Carter, Director